

**INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE**  
**March 5 - 11, 2010**

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**1. [Overview of State Department's 2009 Human Rights Report](#) (03-11-2010)**  
**Report promotes observance of international human rights standards**

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

[2009 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#)

[2009 Human Rights Report: Slovakia](#)

**Why the Reports Are Prepared**

This report is submitted to the Congress by the Department of State in compliance with Sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA), as amended. The law provides that the Secretary of State shall transmit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate by February 25 "a full and complete report regarding the status of internationally recognized human rights, within the meaning of subsection (A) in countries that receive assistance under this part, and (B) in all other foreign countries which are members of the United Nations and which are not otherwise the subject of a human rights report under this Act." We have also included reports on several countries that do not fall into the categories established by these statutes and thus are not covered by the congressional requirement.

In the early 1970s the United States formalized its responsibility to speak out on behalf of international human rights standards. In 1976 Congress enacted legislation creating a Coordinator of Human Rights in the Department of State, a position later upgraded to Assistant Secretary. Legislation also requires that U.S. foreign and trade policy take into account countries' human rights and worker rights performance and that country reports be submitted to the Congress on an annual basis.

### How the Reports Are Prepared

The Department of State prepared this report using information from U.S. embassies and consulates abroad, foreign government officials, nongovernmental and international organizations, and published reports. The initial drafts of the individual country reports were prepared by U.S. diplomatic missions abroad, drawing on information they gathered throughout the year from a variety of sources, including government officials, jurists, the armed forces, journalists, human rights monitors, academics, and labor activists. This information gathering can be hazardous, and U.S. Foreign Service personnel regularly go to great lengths, under trying and sometimes dangerous conditions, to investigate reports of human rights abuse, monitor elections, and come to the aid of individuals at risk, such as political dissidents and human rights defenders whose rights are threatened by their governments.

Once the initial drafts of the individual country reports were completed, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, in cooperation with other Department of State offices, worked to corroborate, analyze, and edit the reports, drawing on their own sources of information. These sources included reports provided by U.S. and other human rights groups, foreign government officials, representatives from the United Nations and other international and regional organizations and institutions, experts from academia, and the media. Bureau officers also consulted experts on worker rights, refugee issues, military and police topics, women's issues, and legal matters. The guiding principle was to ensure that all information was assessed objectively, thoroughly, and fairly.

The reports in this volume will be used as a resource for shaping policy, conducting diplomacy, and making assistance, training, and other resource allocations. They also will serve as a basis for the U.S. Government's cooperation with private groups to promote the observance of internationally recognized human rights.

The Country Reports on Human Rights Practices cover internationally recognized civil, political and worker rights, as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These rights include freedom from torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, from prolonged detention without charges, from disappearance or clandestine detention, and from other flagrant violations of the right to life, liberty and the security of the person.

Universal human rights seek to incorporate respect for human dignity into the processes of government and law. All persons have the right to nationality, the inalienable right to change their government by peaceful means and to enjoy basic freedoms, such as freedom of expression, association, assembly, movement, and religion, without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, or sex. The right to join a free trade union is a necessary condition of a free society and economy. Thus the reports assess key internationally recognized worker rights, including the right of association, the right to organize and bargain collectively, the prohibition of forced or compulsory labor, the status of child labor practices, the minimum age for employment of children, and acceptable work conditions.

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## **2. Biden Tells Israelis Status Quo Is Unsustainable (03-11-2010)**

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — Reaffirming the U.S. commitment to Israel's security, Vice President Biden told Israelis that peace with an independent Palestinian state is "profoundly" in their country's interests.

He urged both sides in the conflict to end the cycle of violence and distrust and move forward in good-faith negotiations to reach a final peace settlement.

"I am an optimist about the prospects for peace because I am a realist," Biden said March 11 at Tel Aviv University. Although achieving peace will be difficult, "there is nowhere else to go," he said. "The status quo is not sustainable."

Biden said a two-state solution is necessary to preserve Israel's identity and achieve lasting security, while also restoring Palestinian dignity and self-respect, which is being denied by their current predicament.

"It's no secret the demographic realities make it increasingly difficult for Israel to remain both a Jewish homeland and a democratic country in the absence of the Palestinian state," the vice president said. "Genuine steps toward a two-state solution are also required to empower those living to live in peace and security with Israel and to undercut their rivals who will never accept that future."

Biden told his Israeli audience that the Palestinian Authority, led by President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, has been working to combat incitement against Israel and reform Palestinian institutions, including building an effective security force that will be able to uphold law and order throughout the Palestinian territories.

"Their commitment to peace is an opportunity that must be seized," he said. "Who has there been better, to date, to have the prospect of settling this with?"

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has endorsed the idea of a Palestinian state and improved the economy and freedom of movement in the West Bank by removing roadblocks and checkpoints, Biden said.

"It's time for Israeli and Palestinian leaders to acknowledge each other's steps to heed this call, even when more remains to be done — and for the world to do the same thing," he said.

Indirect discussions must progress to direct talks between the two sides to resolve permanent-status issues. These must "go promptly and go forward in good faith," he said. "You've got to begin."

Describing himself as a "strong supporter of Israel" throughout his 37 years as a U.S. public official, Biden told the audience in Tel Aviv that "sometimes only a friend can deliver the hardest truth," and he repeated his [condemnation](#) of planned new Israeli settlement construction in East Jerusalem.

"Because that decision, in my view, undermined the trust required for productive negotiations, I ... at the request of President Obama condemned it immediately and unequivocally," he said.

[Biden, Israeli President Peres at Expanded Group Meeting](#)  
[Vice President Biden's Speech at Tel Aviv University](#)

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### **3. New Israeli Construction in Jerusalem Weakens Trust (03-10-2010)**

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — The announcement of new Israeli housing projects in East Jerusalem undermines the trust needed between Israel and the Palestinians to have profitable peace negotiations, Vice President Biden says.

He pledged a continued active role by the Obama administration to encourage talks between the two sides.

There is “no viable alternative to a two-state solution” that would result in the “independent, viable and contiguous” Palestinian state that the United States is fully committed to achieving, Biden said March 10 in remarks with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah. “We also believe that the divide between the Israelis and Palestinians can only be resolved by negotiations,” he said.

Both parties must build an atmosphere that supports peace negotiations, rather than one that complicates them, Biden said.

“The decision by the Israeli government to advance planning for new housing units in East Jerusalem undermined ... the trust that we need right now,” he said. “That is why [I immediately condemned the action](#).”

The Obama administration will hold both sides accountable “for any statements or actions that inflame tensions or prejudice the outcome of talks, as this decision did,” he said.

The vice president said the United States strongly supports efforts by the Palestinian Authority and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad to strengthen Palestinian governing institutions, as well as to develop “the economy of a state.” He said the lives of Palestinians living in Gaza must improve as well, and said the Authority “offers the possibility of a peaceful, independent and more prosperous future,” as opposed to the “false promises of extremists.”

Israeli and Palestinian leaders will need to be “historically bold” to end their long conflict, he said. He pledged to Abbas that “the United States will always stand with those who take the risk that peace requires.”

#### **UNUSUAL TIMING**

State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley told reporters March 10 that the timing of the March 9 housing announcement was “highly unusual,” since the vice president was in Israel for meetings with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other Israeli officials. It also occurred one day after Israel and the Palestinians agreed to resume indirect talks.

“This is precisely the kind of step that we continue to encourage the parties ... to avoid. It undermines trust, and it certainly is not conducive with creating the appropriate atmosphere for the indirect talks to advance,” Crowley said.

Crowley said the Obama administration is in discussions with Israeli officials concerning the announcement.

Now that both sides have agreed to indirect talks, they have a responsibility to “take the appropriate actions and avoid ... the kind of actions that undermine trust,” he said.

“This kind of situation is, in fact, the reason why we believe that they have to get in negotiations so they can put these issues on the table and resolve [them] and then get to a formal agreement,” Crowley said.

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#### **4. Defense Secretary Gates Cites Progress in Afghanistan (03-09-2010)**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — Defense Secretary Robert Gates told reporters in Kabul that long-term success in Afghanistan ultimately will be determined by how well the Afghan government, with international support, can respond to the Afghan people and “inspire their loyalty.”

Gates, in Afghanistan to check on progress since operations were expanded late last year, met March 8 in the Afghan capital with Afghan President Hamid Karzai, U.S. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry and Army General Stanley McChrystal, commander of U.S. forces and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). He also visited U.S. forces north of Kandahar March 9 to thank them for their efforts and sacrifice.

“The most pressing matter we’ve discussed was the major operation that President Karzai approved in Helmand province, where Afghan and international troops have succeeded in clearing almost all of Marjah and Nad Ali,” Gates told reporters at a joint press conference with Karzai. “Of course, the operation in Marjah is only one of many battles to come in a much longer campaign focused on protecting the people of Afghanistan.”

Gates added that since McChrystal made protecting the population the centerpiece of his military strategy, civilian casualties have been reduced.

As operations have expanded in Helmand province in southern Afghanistan, Gates said, Afghan national security forces have taken on a greater role. Karzai has said his goal is to have 300,000 Afghan soldiers and police by the end of 2011. Gates said he will continue to work with NATO allies and other international partners to get more trainers and mentors to help achieve that goal.

“We’re all united in wanting to see the Afghans assume greater responsibility for the security of their own country and their own people,” said Gates, who last visited Afghanistan in December 2009 at the outset of expanded operations.

Soon after President Obama put McChrystal in charge of forces in Afghanistan in 2009 and after McChrystal had completed an in-depth review of the security situation there, McChrystal advised

the president that the situation would deteriorate without a substantial expansion of operations and forces. But Gates said after meetings with McChrystal that the general no longer sees the situation deteriorating and that there have been a number of positive developments.

In December 2009, the president [ordered](#) an additional 30,000 U.S. forces to be sent to Afghanistan, and the international community, including NATO allies, [made pledges](#) of additional military and civilian support, Gates said. So far, about 6,000 of that additional total have been sent to Afghanistan, with the remainder expected to arrive by the end of August.

“Improvements in the relations with Pakistan have yielded tangible results and increased cooperation along the border,” Gates told reporters. Afghan forces have also responded quite well to Karzai’s call to join the operations to secure the country from an insurgency being waged by remnants of the former Taliban regime.

Karzai told reporters that a peace jirga, a tribal assembly, will be convened in about a month and a half and will solicit guidance from the Afghan people on how to move forward toward reintegration and reconciliation where it may be possible. Part of that reconciliation process is to convince some of the Taliban insurgents to lay down their arms and support the country, he said.

Karzai said that some of these insurgents were forced by circumstances or by other means to join the Taliban, but they are not members of that regime or the related al-Qaida terrorist network. And those insurgents who renounce violence and the Taliban and the al-Qaida network would be included in the reconciliation.

“There are, we believe, thousands of those fighting for the Taliban who do so out of economic necessity or because they or their families have been intimidated,” Gates said at the press conference with Karzai. “It’s important to create the conditions for them to rejoin Afghan society and rejoin the Afghan political system.”

But Gates also said it is important that reconciliation be done at a time when it conforms to the terms of the Afghan government, when those who are reconciled agree to or abide by the Afghan constitution, disarm and dissociate with the Taliban and al-Qaida.

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## **5. Biden: Middle East Peace at Moment of “Real Opportunity” (03-09-2010)**

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — Vice President Biden has welcomed the agreement by Israel and the Palestinians to hold indirect talks, saying renewed contact between the two parties will help reduce the level of mistrust between them and lead to a solution that gives both sides peace and secure, recognized borders.

Speaking in Jerusalem March 9 with Israeli President Shimon Peres, Biden said the interests of Israelis and Palestinians are “very much more in line than they are in opposition” and called on both sides to “step back and take a deep breath.”

During his earlier visits to the region during his long career in the U.S. Senate, Biden said, “the idea that we would speak with certitude about a two-state solution wasn’t so obvious.”



The Israeli-Palestinian peace process always had two components, he said, with “the actual definition of a state by borders and sovereign immunity and sovereign capabilities, but also the actual stuff of which a state is made. Institutions, everything from security forces to tax collection capability and everything in between.” That process “is under way,” he added.

Israel and the Palestinians “are at a moment of real opportunity,” the vice president said.

Biden also met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu March 9 and will meet in Ramallah March 10 with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. He will also deliver a speech at Tel Aviv University March 11 before traveling to Jordan March 12.

In a March 8 media note, Special Envoy for Middle East Peace George Mitchell said both sides are discussing “the structure and scope” of the indirect talks. The Obama administration, Mitchell said, hopes the talks “will lead to direct negotiations as soon as possible.”

Mitchell returned to Washington for discussions with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, and plans to return to the Middle East the week of March 14.

“We also again encourage the parties, and all concerned, to refrain from any statements or actions which may inflame tensions or prejudice the outcome of these talks,” Mitchell said.

Israel announced March 9 that it plans new housing in East Jerusalem. In a March 9 statement, Vice President Biden condemned the decision, saying that unilateral action “cannot prejudice the outcome of negotiations on permanent status issues,” such as Jerusalem.

“I condemn the decision by the government of Israel to advance planning for new housing units in East Jerusalem. The substance and timing of the announcement, particularly with the launching of proximity talks, is precisely the kind of step that undermines the trust we need right now and runs counter to the constructive discussions that I’ve had here in Israel. We must build an atmosphere to support negotiations, not complicate them,” Biden said.

Israel’s announcement also “underscores the need to get negotiations under way that can resolve all the outstanding issues of the conflict,” Biden said, adding that good faith negotiations can reach an outcome that will realize the aspirations both sides have for Jerusalem.

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## **6. Obama: Iraqi Election “Important Milestone” (03-08-2010)**

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — Millions of Iraqis braved threats of violence to exercise their right to vote March 7, and President Obama praised their courage and commitment to the democratic process, describing the vote as an “important milestone in Iraqi history.”

Speaking to reporters at the White House March 7, the president pledged continued U.S. support to help the Iraqis “take control of their future,” while working to responsibly end the war and the U.S. troop presence in Iraq.

*March 11, 2010*

"I congratulate the Iraqi people on their courage throughout this historic election. Today, in the face of violence from those who would only destroy, Iraqis took a step forward in the hard work of building up their country," Obama said.

Press reports indicated that at least 35 people were killed by bomb attacks in Baghdad March 7, with additional attacks reported in Mosul, Falluja, Baquba and Samarra.

Obama said, "Al-Qaida in Iraq and other extremists tried to disrupt Iraq's progress by murdering innocent Iraqis who were exercising their democratic rights," but he added that the overall level of security and the prevention of attacks "speaks to the growing capability and professionalism of Iraqi Security Forces, which took the lead in providing protection at the polls."

Along with Iraqis serving as poll station workers and observers at the nearly 50,000 voting booths and more than 8,000 polling stations across the country, Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission organized and administered the vote, and the president said the election "makes it clear that the future of Iraq belongs to the people of Iraq."

Obama said the formation of a new Iraqi government is likely to take months following the vote count, adjudication of any alleged election frauds, and the building of a governing coalition.

"In this process, the United States does not support particular candidates or coalitions. We support the right of the Iraqi people to choose their own leaders," he said.

He also warned of "very difficult days ahead" with more violence, but said Iraq must be allowed to exercise its sovereignty and independence.

"No one should seek to influence, exploit or disrupt this period of transition. Now is the time for every neighbor and nation to respect Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity," the president said.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton also congratulated the Iraqi people in a March 7 statement, praising their determination to reaffirm their commitment to democracy and a future without fear or intimidation.

"There is no better rebuke to the violent extremists who seek to derail Iraq's progress," Clinton said.

The U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Christopher Hill, told ABC television March 8 that Iraq had seen a good campaign and a successful election. All of Iraq's political parties participated in the process, he said, which was a contrast from the 2005 election, which the Sunni population largely boycotted.

The Iraqi public is "overwhelmingly supportive of this political process," Hill said. He said he believes that, despite challenges and rivalries among the political parties, a government will be formed.

"There have been a lot of conversations among the coalitions already. And ... it will be a protracted period where there will be a lot of political horse trading," he said.

General Ray Odierno, who commands U.S. forces in Iraq, told the MSNBC network March 8 that American combat forces remain on schedule to leave the country by the end of August, and the additional 50,000 troops that are scheduled to stay until December 2011 will be there in support of Iraqi forces.



“We’re focused on helping them in their institutional piece of their army, developing long-term programs, developing long-term modernization programs, continuing to help them with their logistics, continuing to help them with the supporting military equipment, such as air sovereignty, being able to protect their oil fields out in the Arabian Gulf,” Odierno said.

Moreover, U.S. support for the Iraqi people and their institutions “will not end in December 2011,” he said. “There’ll have to be a continued commitment by the embassy and all our great civilians here, and the U.S. government, to continue to help Iraq move forward.”

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## **7. Nuclear Treaty Still Curbs Spread of Weapons (03-08-2010)**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — While the threat of global nuclear war largely has passed, the danger of nuclear proliferation continues to make the 40-year-old Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as relevant today as it was during the height of the Cold War, President Obama says.

The treaty, which is commonly known by its initials NPT, came into force March 5, 1970, and was intended to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. It was proposed by Ireland and Finland, which were the first nations to sign it.

Obama, [marking the treaty's 40th anniversary, said March 5](#) that it is built on three pillars: nations with nuclear weapons will move toward disarmament; nations without nuclear weapons will forgo them; and all nations have an “inalienable right” to peaceful nuclear energy. These pillars are also central to Obama’s view of a world free from nuclear weapons, which he first proposed in an [April 5, 2009 speech in Prague](#).

“To promote disarmament, the United States is working with Russia to complete negotiations on a new START Treaty [Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty] that will significantly reduce our nuclear arsenals,” Obama said. “To prevent proliferation, we will build on the historic resolution that we achieved at the United Nations Security Council [last September](#) by bringing together more than 40 nations at our Nuclear Security Summit next month with the goal of securing the world’s vulnerable nuclear materials in four years.”

Negotiators from the United States and Russia have been working since early 2009 to draw up a new treaty to replace the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty that expired in December 2009. Obama said those negotiations are ongoing, and a successor treaty is expected soon.

The United States and Russia have agreed to maintain the treaty until a new agreement is reached, saying that strategic stability is important. In April 2009, when Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev held their first face-to-face meeting in London, [the two leaders pledged](#) to work for a world free of nuclear arms, and said every effort would be made before the end of this year to reduce their nuclear arsenals with the long-term goal of reducing global nuclear tensions.

At the Moscow Summit in July 2009, Obama and Medvedev [agreed to reduce](#) the number of nuclear warheads each possesses to a range of 1,500 to 1,675 over seven years. The treaty would also limit the means of delivery, which includes nuclear-powered submarines, long-range bombers and intercontinental ballistic missiles. The missiles can also be used to deliver non-nuclear

warheads over the same distances, and that has been one of several highly technical areas of discussion.

In Prague in April 2009, Obama called for a nuclear-free world and he pledged to work for greater arms control and nonproliferation goals. Obama's call comes at a time when Washington is enlisting Moscow's support in curbing the nuclear ambitions of both North Korea and Iran. The United States and Russia participate in talks aimed at convincing those two regimes to give up weapons and long-range missile development programs.

In his March 5 statement, Obama said that to ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the United States seeks a new framework for civil nuclear cooperation among nations, including an international fuel bank and the necessary resources and authority to strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency.

"For nations that uphold their responsibilities, peaceful nuclear energy can help unlock advances in medicine, agriculture and economic development," Obama said.

Within weeks U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates will present to the president the Nuclear Posture Review, which will define the Obama administration's nuclear strategy for the United States. Every administration develops one soon after coming into office. Many of the president's objectives to reduce the U.S. arsenal and define how it could be used will be included in the posture review.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton [said March 5](#) that because of the nonproliferation treaty, more nations have given up nuclear weapons, or decided against pursuing them, than have acquired them.

"We are reaffirming our NPT commitments to make progress toward nuclear disarmament and guarantee access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes to all those abiding by their nonproliferation commitments," Clinton said.

In May, the nations that are signatories to the treaty will convene at the United Nations for a monthlong review conference, which takes place every five years, to determine if additional amendments are needed to strengthen the treaty.

"A key to the treaty's success has been its legally binding structure, which holds member nations accountable, discourages proliferation, and brings the benefits of nuclear energy to all corners of the world," Clinton said.

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## **8. Statement by President Obama on Iraqi Parliamentary Election (03-07-2010)** **Obama congratulates people of Iraq for exercising their right to vote**

I congratulate the people of Iraq for casting their ballots in this important parliamentary election. I have great respect for the millions of Iraqis who refused to be deterred by acts of violence, and who exercised their right to vote today. Their participation demonstrates that the Iraqi people have chosen to shape their future through the political process.

I commend the Iraqi government and Iraqi Security Forces for providing security at nearly 50,000 voting booths at more than 8,000 polling stations across Iraq. We mourn the tragic loss of life today, and honor the courage and resilience of the Iraqi people who once again defied threats to advance their democracy. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqi poll workers contributed to the effort, as well as

domestic party and civil society observers. Iraqi citizens around the world also participated in these elections, including Iraqis living in the U.S. who voted in Arlington (VA), Chicago, Dallas, Dearborn, Nashville, Phoenix, San Diego, and San Francisco.

The important work of Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) will continue in the days to come as it counts ballots, tabulates results and investigates complaints. We also salute the invaluable assistance provided by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI).

[President Obama's Remarks on Iraqi National Election](#)  
[Secretary Clinton's Remarks on Iraqi National Elections](#)

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## **9. Obama Marks 40th Anniversary of Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (03-05-2010)** **President outlines three pillars to stop the spread of nuclear weapons**

Forty years ago today, in the midst of a Cold War, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) entered into force, becoming the cornerstone of the world's efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Today, the threat of global nuclear war has passed, but the danger of nuclear proliferation endures, making the basic bargain of the NPT more important than ever: nations with nuclear weapons will move toward disarmament, nations without nuclear weapons will forsake them, and all nations have an "inalienable right" to peaceful nuclear energy.

Each of these three pillars -- disarmament, nonproliferation and peaceful uses -- are central to the vision that I outlined in Prague of stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and seeking a world without them.

To promote disarmament, the United States is working with Russia to complete negotiations on a new START Treaty that will significantly reduce our nuclear arsenals. Our forthcoming Nuclear Posture Review will move beyond outdated Cold War thinking and reduce the number and role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, even as we maintain a safe, secure and effective nuclear deterrent. In addition, we will seek to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and negotiate a treaty to end the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons.

To prevent proliferation, we will build on the historic resolution that we achieved at the United Nations Security Council last September by bringing together more than 40 nations at our Nuclear Security Summit next month with the goal of securing the world's vulnerable nuclear materials in four years. At this spring's treaty review conference and beyond, we will continue to work with allies and partners to strengthen the NPT and to enforce the rights and responsibilities of every nation, because the world cannot afford additional proliferation or regional arms races.

Finally, to ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the United States seeks a new framework for civil nuclear cooperation among nations, including an international fuel bank and the necessary resources and authority to strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency. For nations that uphold their responsibilities, peaceful nuclear energy can help unlock advances in medicine, agriculture and economic development.

It took years of focused effort among many nations to bring the NPT into force four decades ago and to sustain it as the most widely embraced nuclear agreement in history. On this 40th anniversary, the United States reaffirms our resolve to strengthen the nonproliferation regime to meet the challenges of the 21st century as we pursue our ultimate vision of a world without nuclear weapons.

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[Clinton on 40th Anniversary of Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty](#)  
[Ambassador Rice on Anniversary of Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty](#)

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